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Cayman Islands

Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

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Note: The information contained in the present working paper has been derived from public sources, including those of the territorial Government, and from information transmitted to the Secretary-General by the administering Power under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations. Information was transmitted by the administering Power on 8 December 2016. Further details are contained in previous working papers, available from www.un.org/en/decolonization/workingpapers.shtml.

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The Territory at a glance

Territory: The Cayman Islands is a Non-Self-Governing Territory under the Charter of the United Nations administered by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Representative of administrative Power: Governor Helen Kilpatrick (September 2013)

Geography: Located some 290 km west of Jamaica and about the same distance south of Cuba, the Territory comprises three islands: Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac and the adjacent Little Cayman.

Land area: 264 km^2

Exclusive economic zone: 119,137 km^2

Population: 60,413 (male 30,264 and 30,149 female (2015 estimate))

Life expectancy at birth: 81.1 years (male 78.4 years, female 83.9 years (2015 estimate))

Ethnic composition: Afro-European (40 per cent), African (20 per cent), European (20 per cent), other (20 per cent)

Languages: English

Capital: George Town

Head of the territorial Government: Premier Alden McLaughlin (May 2013)

Main political parties: People's Progressive Movement (Progressives), Cayman Islands Democratic Party

Elections: The most recent elections were held on 22 May 2013; the next elections are due in May 2017.

Legislature: Legislative Assembly (18 elected and 2 ex officio members)

Gross domestic product per capita: CI$ 49,774 (nominal, 2015 estimate)

Economy: International financial services and tourism

Main trading partners: United States of America

Unemployment rate: 4.2 per cent (2015 estimate)

Monetary unit: Cayman dollar, pegged to the United States dollar (CI$ 1 = US$ 1.20)

Brief history: The Territory, reportedly sighted by Christopher Columbus in the late fifteenth century, was first settled by the British between 1661 and 1671. A tradition of self-government gradually grew in the Territory beginning in 1734 and a legislative assembly was established in 1831. Slavery was abolished in 1834. In 1863, the Cayman Islands became a dependency of Jamaica and, when the latter achieved independence 99 years later, the Islands remained under the British Crown.

I. Constitutional, legal and political issues

1. Under the 2009 Constitution, the Governor, appointed by the British Crown, is responsible for external affairs, defence, internal security and the appointment of persons to the civil service.

2. The Legislative Assembly consists of the Speaker, 18 elected members and 2 ex officio members, the Deputy Governor and the Attorney General. The Speaker can be either an elected member of the Assembly who is not a minister or a person qualified to be an elected member of the Assembly. The Territory's Cabinet, chaired by the Governor, is composed of the Premier, six other ministers and two ex officio members, namely, the Deputy Governor and the Attorney General. The Premier is a member of the Assembly who is recommended by the party with the majority of seats and appointed by the Governor. The six other ministers are appointed by the Governor upon the advice of the Premier from within the elected membership of the Assembly.

3. During the general elections held in May 2013, the People's Progressive Movement (Progressives) won 9 of the 18 seats in the Assembly. The United Democratic Party, now known as the Cayman Islands Democratic Party, won three seats, and the remaining six seats were won by candidates who ran as independents or as part of differing political groups. Following the election, the former Premier, Juliana O'Connor-Connolly, joined the Progressives, giving them a majority of seats to form the Government. Shortly thereafter, three other newly elected representatives, who had campaigned together as the Coalition for Cayman political group, also agreed to serve in the new Administration, thus giving the Progressives a majority of 13 seats in the Assembly. As a result, the Leader of the Progressives, Alden McLaughlin, was appointed Premier.

4. The judiciary consists of a summary court (including a youth court), a coroner's court, a grand court and a court of appeal. The Summary Court has civil and criminal jurisdiction. Appeals from the Summary Court lie to the Grand Court, which is a superior court of record and administers the common law of England and Wales. Appeals from the Grand Court lie to the Court of Appeal, composed of a president and no fewer than two judges. Further appeal lies, in certain circumstances, to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London. According to the administering Power, the Territory has also developed three "problem-solving" courts to deal with offenders with drug addiction or mental health problems or those who have committed offences in a domestic context.

5. As previously reported, in 2011, the Cayman Islands Review Committee issued a report entitled "United Kingdom and Cayman Islands Relationship Review". Among the central issues raised during the consultative exercise was a desire to achieve more local autonomy, while at the same time establishing a relationship that allowed for sustained support from the United Kingdom — for instance, in case of pressure from the international financial community.

6. In addition, as previously reported, at a meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in September 2013, a former Premier of the Territory stated that the Cayman Islands had no mandate for independence, nor had the question arisen publicly.

II. Budget

7. Effective 1 January 2018, the Territory is scheduled to modify its financial year cycle from July to June to January to December. The 2016/17 budget document of the Territory, which covers an 18-month period from 1 July 2016 to 31 December 2017 in order to assist in that transition, forecasts total operating revenue of CI$ 908.5 million and operating expenditure of CI$ 862.4 million. For the fiscal year 2015/16, the territorial Government estimated earning CI$ 696.1 million in total revenue (CI$ 34.9 million higher than the CI$661.2 million that was originally in the budget), while the forecasted operating and financing expenses were expected to be CI$ 567.8 million (CI$ 13.5 million higher than the original budget of CI$ 554.3 million). According to the administering Power, the territorial Government registered a surplus of CI$ 142.9 million during the 2015/16 fiscal year.

8. Since 2012, the United Kingdom and the Cayman Islands have been working together under a framework for fiscal responsibility that commits the Territory to prudent and transparent fiscal management through effective medium-term planning. According to the administering Power, the Territory complied with the required debt and cash reserve ratios specified in the framework by the deadline of 30 June 2016.

9. The Cayman Islands is a jurisdiction with no direct individual or corporate income tax. The principal sources of government revenue are import duties, financial services, licence fees, work permit fees and stamp duties. There is also an environmental tax on visitors.

10. The Cayman Islands is not eligible for territorial allocations under the eleventh European Development Fund but is eligible for non-programmed aid.

III. Economic conditions

A. General

11. The economy of the Cayman Islands is based on the provision of financial services — the dominant sector in the economy — and tourism. There are no commercial fisheries.

12. The 2015 gross domestic product was estimated at CI$ 2.6 billion, compared with CI$ 2.55 billion in 2014. The administering Power estimated that the growth of gross domestic product in 2015 was 2.0 per cent, compared with 2.4 per cent in 2014. Furthermore, according to the Cayman Islands 2016 semi-annual economic report, in the first half of 2016, the Territory's economy grew by 3.0 per cent, owing mainly to increased economic activity in construction, real estate, renting and business services.

B. Financial services

13. According to government statistics, the financial services sector accounted for 41.2 per cent of the Territory's gross domestic product in 2015.

14. According to the Cayman Islands annual economic report for 2015, the Cayman Islands remained a key conduit for international finance, ranking sixth in the world based on the value of the banking sector's international position on assets and fifth based on liabilities. Bank and trust licences declined 7.1 per cent, from 198 in 2014 to 184 in 2015. The total number of insurers fell by 48 (6.1 per cent) to 739 in 2015, owing mainly to the reduction in international insurers. The total number of company registrations in 2015 decreased by 0.6 per cent to 98,838, although the number of new company registrations increased by 7.8 per cent to 11,864.

15. In 2014, the Cayman Islands became a signatory to the Council of Europe-Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters. Furthermore, in October 2014, the Cayman Islands became one of the first signatories to the Multilateral Competent Authority Agreement on Automatic Exchange of Financial Account Information based on article 6 of the Convention, which signified its commitment to the automatic exchange of information through the OECD Common Reporting Standard. In October 2015, the Cayman Islands adopted legislation to implement the Common Reporting Standard.

16. In April 2016, the Cayman Islands concluded a bilateral arrangement with the United Kingdom on the reciprocal exchange of beneficial ownership information, which is due to come into effect by June 2017 and will allow law enforcement authorities to have near real-time access to beneficial ownership information on corporate and legal entities incorporated into the relevant jurisdictions. In the communiqué adopted at the fifth meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, held in London on 1 and 2 November 2016, the overseas territories and the United Kingdom reiterated their mutual determination to continue to tackle corruption, fraud, money-laundering and the financing of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction and to further enhance transparency and law enforcement cooperation in the context of financial services. They also reiterated their shared commitment to providing the leadership necessary to meet the June 2017 deadline for the implementation of new arrangements regarding the exchange of beneficial ownership information on companies incorporated into their jurisdictions and to continuing to provide the highest levels of law enforcement cooperation possible before that date.

C. Tourism

17. Tourism was one of the key drivers of growth of gross domestic product in 2015 and in the first half of 2016. Cayman Airways, along with other airlines, operates international services from various cities in Canada, Cuba, Honduras, Jamaica, Panama, the United States and a number of European countries. Domestic airline services and charters operate between the three islands in the Territory.

18. In 2015, overall tourist arrivals were approximately 2.1 million, an increase of 5.5 per cent compared with 2014, owing mainly to a 6.7 per cent increase in cruise arrivals, which were approximately 1.7 million. Cruise arrivals in 2015 were at their highest since 2007. In addition, stay-over arrivals increased in 2015 to some 385,400, a growth of 0.7 per cent from 2014 (some 382,800). The number of stay-over arrivals in the Territory has been on the rise since 2009, while overall arrivals

are fluctuating between 1.7 million and 2.1 million. Furthermore, according to the territorial Government, in the first six months of 2016, total tourist arrivals were nearly 1.2 million, an increase of 5.5 per cent compared with the same period in 2015. Of those tourist arrivals, air arrivals declined by 1.4 per cent, from 213,493 to 210,490, while cruise arrivals increased by 7.1 per cent, from 908,881 to 973,305.

D. Agriculture

19. In 2015, the agriculture and fishing industries contributed CI$ 10.4 million to the gross domestic product of the Territory, compared with CI$ 10.1 million in 2014, representing 0.4 per cent of total gross domestic product in 2015.

20. The Department of Agriculture continues to encourage local agricultural production through the provision of technical support, education and assistance to farmers.

E. Infrastructure

21. According to official data, the number of building permits granted in 2015 increased by 36.5 per cent, from 539 in 2014 to 736, marking the first such increase since 2009. On the other hand, as in 2014, the value of building permits declined, from CI$ 356.1 million in 2014 to CI$ 186.9 million, a drop of 47.5 per cent. A total of 990 proposed projects were approved at a value of CI$ 458.8 million in 2015, compared with 1,029 projects at a value of CI$ 411.6 million in 2014.

22. According to the administering Power, the Grand Cayman road network consists of approximately 515 travel lane km with approximately 58 km of primary arterial roads and 95 km of secondary arterial roads.

23. According to the 2016-2017 budget policy statement of 30 May 2016, the redevelopment project of Owen Roberts International Airport is expected to be completed by mid-2018, with its first phase almost complete and its second phase set to begin.

F. Telecommunications and utilities

24. Currently, four telecommunications companies provide fixed and/or mobile voice and data services and three companies provide subscription television services. There are 15 FM radio broadcasting stations in the Territory. According to the administering Power, as at 30 June 2016, the total number of fixed and mobile telephone lines had increased by 1.2 per cent to 124,113. Over the same period, the number of fixed high-speed broadband connections increased by 6 per cent to 25,613.

25. On Grand Cayman, where the Caribbean Utilities Company has a non-exclusive licence for electricity generation and an exclusive licence for its transmission and distribution, almost all power generation relies on imported diesel. In October 2015, the Electricity Regulatory Authority approved a 5 MW solar power purchase agreement between an independent power producer and the Caribbean Utilities Company to provide energy to power some 800 homes with renewable

solar energy. According to the administering Power, the project is scheduled to be completed in early 2017. Furthermore, since 2011, Grand Cayman has had a consumer-owned renewable energy generation programme, which allows consumers to generate energy from renewable sources and to be compensated through stable, long-term rates, with a current capacity limit of 6 MW, increased from 4 MW in 2016. On Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, the Cayman Brac Power and Light Company has exclusive licences that are scheduled to be renegotiated in 2017-2018. Official statistics indicate that net electricity production in 2015 increased from 604,700 MW hours to 623,700 MW hours, or 3.1 per cent, compared with 2014, while electricity consumption rose from 564,100 MW hours to 582,000 MW hours, or 3.2 per cent, compared with 2014.

26. According to official data, in 2015, water consumption in the Cayman Islands remained the same, at approximately 1.7 million gallons, while water production decreased to 1.9 million gallons, or 6.2 per cent, from 2.1 million gallons in 2014.

IV. Social conditions

A. General

27. According to information provided by the administering Power, in the fiscal year ending 30 June 2016, approximately 2,000 families received assisted from some form of welfare service.

28. According to the administering Power, to provide a more effective response to the social issues within the Territory, the Ministry of Community Affairs, Youth and Sports continues to strategically realign the services offered under its ambit, with specific focus on child safeguarding. The Needs Assessment Unit provides welfare services, inclusive of food, housing, rental and burial, to Caymanians in need. In addition, the Department of Children and Family Services manages clinical services (such as care and protection investigation, assessment and monitoring of cases that involve child abuse, foster care and adoption and custody assessments), programme services (including the provision of residential services to adults with special needs and persons with disabilities, community development and disaster preparedness), as well as services to senior citizens. In May 2016, the territorial Government established the Child Safeguarding Board, comprising relevant government agencies and persons representing non-governmental bodies, as a forum for those agencies to work together to improve the management of child protection in the Cayman Islands.

29. According to the administering Power, the Department of Counselling Services continued to enhance its services to address more effectively a broader range of emerging needs in society through, for example, community-based therapy, counselling services that were restructured to provide more effective responses to the growing number of persons in need, a newly introduced music therapy programme, parent coaching, skills-building workshops and other programmes.

B. Labour and immigration

30. According to government statistics, in 2015, the labour force numbered 40,870 persons, comprising 19,575 Caymanians (47.9 per cent of the labour force) and 21,296 non-Caymanians (52.1 per cent). Total employment in 2015 was estimated at 39,138, 3.8 per cent higher than that of the previous year. The unemployment rate among Caymanians declined from 7.9 per cent in 2014 to 6.2 per cent in 2015, while that among non-Caymanians increased from 1.5 per cent in 2014 to 2.5 per cent in 2015. The territorial Government estimated that the unemployment rate as of spring 2016 was 3.9 per cent.

31. The independent Minimum Wage Advisory Committee, appointed by Cabinet under the provisions of the Labour Law (2011), presented its final recommendations on establishing a minimum wage regime for the Cayman Islands in February 2015, which were accepted by the Government. An hourly minimum wage of CI$ 6 was established as at 1 March 2016 through the Labour (National Minimum Basic Wage) Order 2016.

32. As previously reported, the Territory's Immigration Law was amended in 2013 to effect changes, among other things, to the grant of permanent residence, the expiration of the term-limit exemption permit for key employees and the tenure of specialist caregivers.

33. Government statistics indicate that the number of work permits for non-Caymanian workers increased by 8.1 per cent, from 21,061 in 2014 to 22,756 in 2015, and that the number in the first half of 2016 increased by 8.0 per cent compared with the same period in 2015.

C. Education

34. Education is compulsory for all resident children between 5 and 16 years of age. The public education system caters to about two thirds of Caymanian children, with the remainder attending fee-paying schools. According to the administering Power, non-Caymanian children can access the public system only in exceptional circumstances. Two public and two private institutions provide tertiary education. Students from overseas territories benefit from the home student rate for school fees at British universities, provided that they have lived in a British overseas territory, the European Economic Area or Switzerland for the three years prior to the first academic year of their course of study. The European Union provides for access to, among others, horizontal European Union funds, such as those for higher education and vocational education.

D. Public health

35. Health insurance is compulsory in the Cayman Islands. The Territory's Health Services Authority is responsible for the provision of all public health care.

E. Crime and public safety

36. The 452-strong Royal Cayman Islands Police Service is headed by a commissioner, who reports to the Governor.

37. According to the official statistics provided by the territorial Government, in 2015, overall reported crime decreased by 6.7 per cent compared with the previous year, from 3,948 incidents in 2014 to 3,685 in 2015. According to the administering Power, the number of serious crimes in 2015 dropped to 860, compared with 921 in 2014, a decrease of 6.6 per cent. Burglary continues to be a persistent problem, with 767 burglaries recorded in 2015, a slight decrease from the 777 recorded in 2014.

38. In addition, there were 1,068 traffic accidents in 2015, a 10.3 per cent increase in the 968 accidents reported in 2014. The number of fatalities increased from 4 in 2014 to 12 in 2015.

39. The official statistics from the territorial Government indicates that the offences dealt with under the Youth Court in 2015 increased from 120 in 2014 to 167 in 2015. The number of juvenile convictions in 2015 rose to 64 (52 men and 12 women), compared with 40 (33 men and 7 women) in 2014.

40. The Cayman Islands Monetary Authority is the body responsible for monitoring compliance with international financial standards in the Territory and for reporting findings to the territorial Government on a regular basis. An anti-corruption commission was established under the Territory's Anti-Corruption Law (2008).

41. During 2016, the United Kingdom continued to provide funding for a law enforcement adviser based in Miami, United States, who coordinated, managed and facilitated training and the provision of strategic advice in order to introduce new techniques and skills to the Territory's law enforcement agencies. Furthermore, the HMS *Mersey* and RFA *Wave Knight* were in the Caribbean, from January to July and from July to December 2016, respectively, as part of the North Atlantic patrol tasking of the Royal Navy, ensuring a year-round maritime presence of the United Kingdom and providing humanitarian assistance, disaster relief and crisis communications support in the region. Both ships also worked with other regional navies and coast guards to combat illegal activities on the high seas. During the hurricane season, a larger Royal Navy or Royal Fleet Auxiliary ship is on standby to provide humanitarian and disaster relief support to Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

F. Human rights

42. The Territory is subject to several major human rights conventions to which the administering Power has acceded, including the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and has a human rights commission with responsibilities that include investigating complaints. Following a formal request by the territorial Government in December 2013 to the Government of the United Kingdom, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was extended to the Cayman Islands on 16 March 2016.

43. Part I of the Cayman Islands Constitution Order (2009) setting out the Bill of Rights, Freedoms and Responsibilities came into effect on 6 November 2012 with the exception of the provisions relating to the segregation of prisoners, which came into effect in November 2013. According to the administering Power, a number of claims to redress alleged human rights violations had been determined by the courts, including some claims challenging the compatibility of legislation with the Bill of Rights.

44. According to the administering Power, the Gender Equality Tribunal established pursuant to the Gender Equality Law (2011) has heard and determined seven complaints of discrimination.

45. The Cayman Islands Disability Policy 2014-2033 was developed with the vision of ensuring that persons with disabilities could live with dignity, be respected and have the opportunity to participate fully in society. According to the administering Power, the Legislative Assembly passed the Disabilities (Solomon Webster) Law on 24 October 2016 to implement parts of the Policy and to provide a further layer of protection of the civil and political rights of persons with disabilities beyond the scope provided for in the Constitution and other existing laws. In particular, the Law provides for the establishment of a national council for persons with disabilities with oversight of policy implementation and the creation of a voluntary disabilities register to improve the quantity and quality of available data on persons with disabilities in order to inform policy, legislation and services.

46. According to the administering Power, the Cayman Islands Older Persons Policy 2016-2035 was approved by Cabinet on 21 October 2016 to advance the well-being of older persons in all aspects of life, including lifelong education, family and community-based support services, autonomy and self-fulfilment, gender issues, health, employment and legal protection.

47. In the communiqué adopted at the fifth meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, the United Kingdom and the overseas territories, including the Cayman Islands, agreed to work together to conduct a review of reservations to core United Nations human rights treaties ahead of the preparation of the report of the United Kingdom under the universal periodic review conducted by the Human Rights Council, to be submitted in 2017. They also committed themselves to working together to further develop the capacity of territories' national human rights institutions, where established, in line with the international standards set out in the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (Paris Principles), and to deepening understanding of their shared obligations with regard to international human rights.

V. Environment and disaster preparedness

48. The Cayman Islands are included in the United Kingdom's ratification of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Department of Environment works, along with other agencies, to ensure that the Territory's natural resources are preserved and protected. Furthermore, Hazard Management Cayman Islands, a government agency, has overall responsibility for the Territory's hazard management programme, including preparedness, response, mitigation and recovery. An annual

hurricane exercise is conducted prior to the hurricane season, which runs from 1 June to 30 November.

49. Increasing recreational and artisanal fishing in the shallow waters around the Cayman Islands continues to represent a threat to the Territory's marine environment. The National Conservation Law (2013) aims to protect and conserve endangered, threatened and endemic plants and their habitats, as well as the variety of wildlife in the Cayman Islands. The National Conservation Council was established in 2014 by the Law and to facilitate its goals. Furthermore, the Department of Agriculture collaborates with the Council to protect the agricultural sector from the introduction of invasive alien species that could have a negative impact on crop and livestock production, as well as public health and national flora and fauna, such as the Cayman blue iguana, which, until recently, had been reduced to just a few.

50. Following the adoption of the Paris Agreement at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2015, the territorial Government initiated a review of its draft national energy policy of 2013 and draft climate change policy of 2011, which were aimed at facilitating the transition to a climate-resilient, low-carbon economy.

51. In the communiqué adopted at the fifth meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, in 2016, the Government of the United Kingdom and the overseas territories recognized the impact that climate change had on the economies, infrastructure and ecosystems of the territories and the important interest of the overseas territories in international efforts to combat and mitigate the effects of climate change. The Government of the United Kingdom committed itself to consulting with territorial Governments on the issue of the application of the Paris Agreement to the territories. It reiterated its full commitment to consulting the overseas territories ahead of its participation in international forums on climate change to ensure that their priorities were taken into account and to including them in delegations, where appropriate, while welcoming the territories' links with regional and international organizations.

VI. Relations with international organizations and partners

52. The Cayman Islands is an associate member of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and a member of the Universal Postal Union. The territory also participates in the work of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) as an associate member and is a member of the Caribbean Development Bank and the International Olympic Committee. In October 2016, the Cayman Islands hosted, for the first time as an associate member of CARICOM, the annual Caribbean Week of Agriculture, in collaboration with the secretariat of CARICOM and the Alliance for Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu.

53. As a Non-Self-Governing Territory of the United Kingdom, the Territory is associated with but not a part of the European Union. At the fifth meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, in 2016, the United Kingdom committed itself to involving Gibraltar and the overseas territories as it prepared for

negotiations to leave the European Union, in accordance with their various constitutional relationships with the United Kingdom, to ensure that their priorities were taken into account. Since January 2014, the Territory has been a partner under the 2013 Overseas Association Decision of the Council of the European Union, which was approved, among other things, in an effort to move away from a classic development cooperation approach to a reciprocal partnership that promotes sustainable development and the values and standards of the European Union in the wider world.

VII. Future status of the Territory

A. Position of the territorial Government

54. Information on the position of the territorial Government regarding the future status of the Cayman Islands is reflected in section I above.

B. Position of the administering Power

55. At the 7th meeting of the Fourth Committee, on 10 October 2016, during the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, the representative of the United Kingdom stated that the relationship of the Government of the United Kingdom with its overseas territories was a modern one based on partnership, shared values and the right of the people of each Territory to choose to remain British.

56. He went on to say that, since the publication in June 2012 by the Government of the United Kingdom of a white paper entitled *The Overseas Territories: Security, Success and Sustainability*, his Government had worked closely with the overseas territories to further develop those partnerships. At annual meetings of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, the United Kingdom and the territories reviewed strategy and commitments and, in 2015, the United Kingdom had affirmed its commitment to the advancement of the peoples of the territories, their just treatment and protecting them from abuses and the importance of promoting their right to self-determination. His Government's fundamental responsibility was to ensure the security and good governance of the territories and their peoples.

57. In the communiqué adopted at the fifth meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, the Government of the United Kingdom and the leaders of the overseas territories stated that the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, applied to the peoples of the overseas territories. They reaffirmed the importance of promoting the right of the peoples of the territories to self-determination, a collective responsibility of all parts of the Government of the United Kingdom. They committed themselves to exploring ways in which the overseas territories could maintain international support in countering hostile sovereignty claims. It was also stated that, should a Territory with a permanent population wish it, the United Kingdom would continue to support its request to be removed from the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. They agreed that the fundamental structure of their constitutional relationships was the right one — powers were devolved to the elected Governments of the territories to the maximum extent possible consistent with the United Kingdom's retaining those

powers necessary to discharge its sovereign responsibilities. They also agreed upon the need to continue their engagement on those issues to ensure that constitutional arrangements worked effectively to promote the best interests of the territories and of the United Kingdom.

VIII. Action taken by the General Assembly

58. On 6 December 2016, the General Assembly adopted resolution 71/112 on the question of the Cayman Islands without a vote, on the basis of the report of the Special Committee (A/71/23) and the subsequent recommendation by the Fourth Committee. In that resolution, the General Assembly:

(a) Reaffirmed the inalienable right of the people of the Cayman Islands to self-determination, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;

(b) Also reaffirmed that, in the process of decolonization of the Cayman Islands, there was no alternative to the principle of self-determination, which is also a fundamental human right, as recognized under the relevant human rights conventions;

(c) Further reaffirmed that it was ultimately for the people of the Cayman Islands to determine freely their future political status, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter, the Declaration and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, and in that connection called upon the administering Power, in cooperation with the territorial Government and appropriate bodies of the United Nations system, to develop political education programmes for the Territory in order to foster an awareness among the people of their right to self-determination in conformity with the legitimate political status options, based on the principles clearly defined in Assembly resolution 1541 (XV) and other relevant resolutions and decisions;

(d) Recalled the 2009 Constitution of the Cayman Islands, and stressed the importance of the work of the Constitutional Commission, including its work on human rights education;

(e) Requested the administering Power to assist the Territory by facilitating its work concerning public awareness outreach efforts, consistent with Article 73 *b* of the Charter, and in that regard called upon the relevant United Nations organizations to provide assistance to the Territory, if requested;

(f) Welcomed the active participation of the Territory in the work of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean;

(g) Stressed the importance of the Special Committee being apprised of the views and wishes of the people of the Cayman Islands and enhancing its understanding of their conditions, including the nature and scope of the existing political and constitutional arrangements between the Cayman Islands and the administering Power;

(h) Called upon the administering Power to participate in and cooperate fully with the work of the Special Committee in order to implement the provisions of Article 73 *e* of the Charter and the Declaration and in order to advise the Committee on the implementation of the provisions under Article 73 *b* of the Charter on efforts to promote self-government in the Cayman Islands, and encouraged the administering Power to facilitate visiting and special missions to the Territory;

(i) Reaffirmed the responsibility of the administering Power under the Charter to promote the economic and social development and preserve the cultural identity of the Territory, and requested the administering Power to take steps to enlist and make effective use of all possible assistance, on both a bilateral and a multilateral basis, in the strengthening of the economy of the Territory;

(j) Took into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals, stressed the importance of fostering the economic and social sustainable development of the Territory by promoting sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, creating greater opportunities for all, reducing inequalities, raising basic standards of living, fostering equitable social development and inclusion and promoting the integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems that supported, inter alia, economic, social and human development, while facilitating ecosystem conservation, regeneration, restoration and resilience in the face of new and emerging challenges, and strongly urged the administering Power to refrain from undertaking any kind of illicit, harmful and unproductive activities, including the use of the Territory as a tax haven, that were not aligned with the interest of the people of the Territory;

(k) Requested the Territory and the administering Power to take all measures necessary to protect and conserve the environment of the Territory against any degradation, and once again requested the specialized agencies concerned to monitor environmental conditions in the Territory and to provide assistance to the Territory, consistent with their prevailing rules of procedure;

(l) Requested the Special Committee to continue to examine the question of the Cayman Islands and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session and on the implementation of the present resolution.